Consumer Cooperative Society

1724. SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA NAHATA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to refer the answer to Unstarred Question 2714 given in Rajya Sabha on 2nd December, 1995 and state:

(a) whether the Society has got itself registered under the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 1984, if not, the reasons therefor and under which rule is the Society opening branch stores outside Delhi;

(b) whether under the byelaws of the Society it is to undertake consumer activities in Delhi only and not outside Delhi; and

(c) whether the society has accumulated huge profits; if so, the accumulated profits of the Society as on date giving the reasons for resorting to profits and is that one of the objectives of the Society registered under Cooperative Act?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) As per provisions of Section 18 of the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 1984 (the Act), a Cooperative Society registered under any State Act may convert itself into a Multi-State Cooperative Society after amending its bye-laws and observing the statutory requirements as prescribed in the Act and the Rules framed thereunder. No proposal has been received from the said society for its conversion into a Multi-State Cooperative Society.

(b) and (c) The society in question has branches outside Delhi to serve the Central Govt. Employees stationed outside Delhi. As this society is registered under the Delhi Cooperative Societies Act, 1972, it comes within the purview of the Registrar Cooperative Societies, Govt. of National Capital Territory of Delhi, and hence audit of the accounts of the said society denoting profit etc. is the concern of the Registrar of Cooperative Societies, Delhi.

Export of Mushrooms

1725. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the registered target of production of mushrooms, the export and production of other quality of Mushroom in Himachal Pradesh during the years 1997 and 1998;

(b) what quantity has been exported during the above period: and

(c) the incentives granted to the growers of this production in Himachal Pradesh during 1997 and 1998 in view of the tremendous export potential?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) According to available information, no target has been laid down for production and export of Mushroom in Himachal Pradesh for 1997 and 1998. Mushroom production in the State is estimated to be 500 tonnes per annum.

(b) State-wise export figures are not available. However, total Mushroom exports from India during 1995-96 and 1996-97 was 6884 tonnes and 5120 tonnes valued at Rs. 2593.27 lakhs and Rs. 1931.66 lakhs respectively.

(c) The Department of Agriculture and Cooperation is implementing a central sector scheme for mushroom cultivation, under which the following assistance is provided:

(a) Establishment of spawn production unit (Rs. 11.50 lakhs);

(b) Establishment of pasteurised compost unit (Rs. 28.50 lakhs);

(c) Training of farmers— Rs. 500 per beneficiary.

Himachal Pradesh was allocated two pasteurised compost units during the VIII Plan and one unit each of spawn production and pasteurised compost during 1998-99. A sum of Rs. 36.77 lakhs have been released to the state during curent year, for spawn production and pasteur-

ised compost units and training of farmers.

Examination of Annual Reports of Undertakings

1726. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the names of public sector undertakings, which are coming under the administrative control of the Ministry of Agriculture;

(b) whether the Ministry examines in details the annual reports of such undertakings and the audit reports and the comments of the auditors; and

(c) if so, what are the serious audit objections in the undertakings reports and what actions were taken by the Government in the reports for 1995-96 and 1996-97?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) There are two Public Sector Undertakings under the Administrative control of the Ministry of Agriculture, viz. National Seeds Corporation and State Farms Corporation of India.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) No serious audit objections were observed in the reports of National Seeds Corporation and State Farms Corporation of India for the financial years 1995-96 and 1996-97. Hence, question does not arise.

National Centre for Crop Forecast

1727. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to set up a National Centre for crop forecast in the country and if so, the details thereof;

(b) where this Centre is proposed to be set up; and

(c) how the Centre will help in stabilizing the prices of essential commodities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) and (b) The Government has set up the National Crop Forecasting Centre (NCFC) in the Ministry of Agriculture to strengthen the process of decision making and management of agriculture sector. The NCFC has started functioning with effect from 3.12.98 with a small professional team, carved out of existing resources of the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation. To begin with the focus of tracking the crop prospects is prioritised to thirteen major crops viz. Rice, Wheat, Maize, Bajra, Tur Gram, Groundnut, Rapeseed & Mustard, Soyabean, Sugarcane, Cotton, Potato and Onion.

The mandate for NCFC is to provide effective and unified institutional framework for the entire crop forecasting system involving data flow from different sources and its assimilation and analysis using state-of-the-art methods and techniques.

(c) The advance information on likely crop prospects would help the Government to take stock of emerging scenario of supply and availability of agricultural commodities. This in turn would facilitate decisions regarding export, import, market intervention etc. with a view to impart price stability, particularly of essential commodities.

Cashew Cultivation

1728. SHRI J CHITHARANJAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had any schemes to help the cashew cultivation to cut down old and low yielding cashew trees and replant; and

(b) if so, what are the details of such schemes?